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Coordination and integration of international statistical programmes

Global integrated presentation of the work of the international organizations in statistical methodology

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in accordance with a request by the Statistical Commission at its thirtieth session.[1] It describes progress made in the compilation of a database on methodological work of the international organizations. The database is structured into a section on "work in progress", according to a format endorsed by the Statistical Commission, and a section on "completed work". The current contents of both elements of the database are described in detail.

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4* (E/1999/24), chap. I.B.

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I. Introduction

1. At its thirtieth session (New York, 1-5 March 1999), the Statistical Commission requested the United Nations Statistics Division to proceed with the work on the global integrated presentation of the work plans of the international organizations in statistical methodology, and requested all organizations to participate in that endeavour. In addition, the Commission requested the Division to prepare an annotated list of previously adopted statistical standards as a companion document to the integrated presentation and to report to the Statistical Commission on the implementation of the work at its next session.[1]

2. At the thirty-third session of the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities (Madrid, 14-16 September 1999), the Subcommittee took note of the work of the United Nations Statistics Division in the development of the web site for the global integrated presentation of the work of the international organizations in statistical methodology, and recognized that there were some questions of coverage that were unique to individual organizations and that the definition of what should be included would be refined in the light of experience. It was agreed that the Division would send a request to organizations specifying the information required to complete the database, and that organizations would, as far as possible, provide the information within 60 days. It was also agreed that the database would be updated on an annual basis. The Subcommittee recommended that the Division approach the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) with a view to rationalizing the information requirements on current methodological work between the integrated presentation of the CES and the Commission (see ACC/1999/19, para. 2 (d)).

3. Following consultations with the United Nations Statistics Division, the Bureau of CES agreed in its meeting in November 1999 to slightly adapt its format of presentation in order to harmonize it with the template of the Division's database and thus facilitate the extraction of relevant information. The present report describes the content of the web site database on the global integrated presentation prior to November 1999. The Commission will receive an oral update on how the new reporting format of CES affects the work on the United Nations Statistics Division database.

II. Content of the web site database

4. The web site database (http://domino.un.org/ProgWork.nsf) is composed of two parts: the "work in progress" part, containing information on planned or current work in progress of the international organizations; and the "completed work" part, which provides details and annotations on previously adopted statistical standards and published methodological work. The required information is input into the database via two similar templates, one for work in progress (see annex I) and one for completed work (see annex II).

A. Work in progress

5. The United Nations Statistics Division has entered information into the database on its methodological work in progress in economic, social, demographic and environment statistics. The database currently contains entries on 15 Division projects. The Division has entered into the database the available information on the work in progress by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in economic, social, demographic and environment statistics, as contained in the documents entitled "Programmes of international statistical work in the ECE region, 1999/2000 and 2000/2001: an integrated presentation" (see CES/1999/10/Adds. 3-5). The database currently contains partial information on about 20 different projects being undertaken by ECE, Eurostat and OECD. Additional information will need to be obtained from these organizations on their projects in order to be able to complete the work in progress template and present a more complete description of their ongoing work in statistical methodology. Information on work in progress undertaken by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank which was available from the pilot study has also been included in the database.

B. Completed work

6. Information on its completed work in the areas of economic, social, demographic and environment statistics has been entered by the United Nations

Statistics Division, covering more than 115 publications issued since 1949. The sources of the information include an annotated bibliography of methodological publications issued prior to 1985, based on inputs provided by many of the organizations, which was prepared by the Division in the late 1980s; the 1993 United Nations statistical publications and documents catalogue; and descriptions contained in various Division documents.

7. To the extent that information on the completed work of ECE, Eurostat and OECD is available in the above-mentioned documents of CES on the integrated presentation of the programmes of international statistical work in the ECE region, the Division has entered it in the database. Nevertheless, since CES documents do not aim at providing detailed or comprehensive information on publications already issued and cover recent years only, the information currently contained in the database on 14 publications by ECE, Eurostat and OECD cannot be considered to be complete. Additional information will need to be obtained from these organizations on the 14 publications, as well as others that should be included in the database.

8. Information on work completed prior to 1985 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ILO, IMF, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the World Health Organization (WHO) is available in the above-mentioned annotated bibliography of methodological publications, and has been entered into the database by the United Nations Statistics Division. The database contains approximately 120 entries on publications issued by these organizations. Information on the organizations' completed work subsequent to 1985, however, needs to be obtained.

III. Points for discussion

9. The Commission may wish to consider the following:

(a) Does the Commission agree with the level of detail included in the database on methodological work in progress and completed work?

(b) Does the Commission wish to make proposals on how the United Nations Statistics Division could improve the web site database presentation and how it should be used?

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4* (E/1999/24), para. 130 (d), (e) and (g).

Annex I

"Work in progress" template

Global work programmes in statistics: Methodology	Subject of interest:
	Project:
	Lead organization:
	Publication title: (not applicable)
	Status: (not applicable)

For work in progress

Commission's last decision:

Problem outline:

Priority objective:

Envisaged time-frame:

Instruments to achieve the objective:

Support:

Advice:

Coordination:

Rapporteur:

Action by the Commission:

Save and close

Annex II

"Completed work" template

Global work programmes in statistics: Methodology	Subject of interest:
	Project: (not applicable)
	Lead organization:
	Publications title:
	Status: ☐ Document has been published

For completed work

Description of the publication:

Year published:

Other organizations involved:

Additional information:

Previous/subsequent versions:

Contact person:

Name:

Organization:

E-mail address:

Save and close